

The **Alchemy** of IRWMP

Building Relationships in Gold
Country

CABY Region – Study in Contrast

- From the crest of the Sierras to the valley floor
- Alpine meadows to vernal pools, oak woodlands to pine forests
- 104 species and nine habitats of special concern
- Rugged, lightly populated rural areas to some of the fastest growing urban areas of the state
- 70% plus of our lands are publicly owned

A Rat's Nest of Infrastructure

- Small, rural systems on wells and creeks
- Urban systems
- Raw water/Ag using intricate canal system
- Exports to CVP
- Most highly plumbed water system in the Western United States
 - 790 miles of canal, 147 dams, 36 power houses, and 19 tunnels

The Players

- Six water agencies
- 20-plus non-profit organizations
- Four federal resource agencies
- Two state resource agencies
- Three local governments
- Four Resource Conservation Districts

The History

- The Gold Rush-era water delivery infrastructure became basis for all subsequent delivery systems
- Water agencies and non-profits had a history of mutual mistrust and wariness
- Inter-agency and inter-organizational collaboration was virtually nil

From the Individual to the Collaborative

- Process facilitator-designed and led
- Careful attention to relationship building
- Trust building deemed more important initially than document preparation
- Collaborative project design a goal
- All processes transparent
- Participation by all members remained strong throughout

The Collaborative Process

- Full-day visioning workshop
- Monthly meetings initially
- Projects both pre-existing and jointly developed
- Ranking done by committee and approved by the whole
- Goals, objectives, and strategies all developed collaboratively

How the Game was Played

- Personal outreach to each stakeholder group
- There are no stupid questions
- Every voice is equal
- Recognize the “power of the grapevine”
- Ground rules included specifics for conflict resolution
- All decisions by consensus
- Circle of communication from member to their boards and back to CABY

Project Development: A Study in Horse Trading

- All 30-plus projects ranked by committee
- Criteria for ranking based first on consistency with plan, then Prop 50 objectives
- High priority given to collaboratively designed projects
- Group self-ranked and then revised overall project ranking to reflect outcomes

Lessons Learned

- Durable relationships take time
- Trust creates the capacity to absorb disagreement
- Conflict creates opportunity
- Facilitation was critical to successful outcomes